

treason was not that of a fainthearted man
 desirous to
 a retreat open for himself in every event™ but
 that of a man
 of dauntless courage, profound policy, and
 measureless
 ambition/ ' /

It is unusual for a historian of sober and
 well-balanced
 judgement to claim such omniscience about
 men's motives.
 What Macaulay does is to state his conjecture
 as if it were a
 fact; the conjecture is perhaps plausible, but
 the evidence
 on which it is based is so slight that it ought to
 be clearly
 stated and its validity questioned.

The account of the unsuccessful expedition
 against Brest
 in 1694 supplies another example of the same
 prejudice. It
 is certain that Maryborough sent information
 to James II,
 about the beginning of May, telling him that
 the expedition
 then being prepared in England was directed
 against Brest.
 But it is certain also that, some time
 previously,, similar
 information had reached Louis XIV from
 Godolphin and
 Lord Arran, and that before the receipt of
 Maryborough's
 information Louis XIV had ordered Vauban
 to go to
 Brest and erect batteries and gather troops to
 frustrate the
 intended attack. Furthermore, William III and
 his gov-
 ernment were aware that their design upon
 Brest was well
 known to the French and that active
 preparations had
 made to meet it. Macaulay omits these facts :
 he repre-
 sents Marlborough as the sole source of the
 information
 possessed by Louis XIV, and the

preparations of the French as the immediate consequence of Marlborough's warning. He supplements these material misstatements by a purely conjectural explanation of Marlborough's motives, and gives this conjecture as a certain fact. Marlborough wished, he asserts, to get rid of his rival, Talmash, the general who commanded the expedition. Talmash was

¹ V, 2124 (xviii).